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TAGS: [TSPL](#) [SENV](#) [APER](#) [KSCA](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: Jordan: 2006 Request for Science Fellows

Reftel: (A) State 35305  
(B) 2005 State 52318  
(C) 2005 State 52339  
(D) 2005 State 166610  
(E) 2005 State 166574  
(F) 2004 State 8087

¶1. Summary: Embassy Amman would like to request Embassy Science Fellows (ref A) for 1) an assessment of the marine ecosystem, 2) environmental law enforcement, 3) further work on managing industrial wastewater, and 4) developing Jordan's research sector. End summary.

Marine Ecosystem Assessment - NOAA or Smithsonian  
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¶2. Jordan has a small but high quality coral reef ecosystem at its southern port of Aqaba that is the centerpiece of a growing tourism industry. Aqaba is also the site of several large real estate developments, a container port, a bulk commodities port, and other commercial facilities, all jammed into a small coastline. In addition, the Israeli port of Eilat adjoins Aqaba, so international coordination on environment and conservation is an additional critical element.

¶3. There are several institutions with a role in marine protection. Yarmouk University operates a small Marine Science Station in Aqaba. Aqaba is governed by the semi-autonomous Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA), which maintains marine parks and reviews marine environmental impact assessments. The Royal Marine Conservation Society is a Jordanian NGO that focuses on marine conservation.

¶4. Post requests a marine survey specialist, most likely from the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration or from the Smithsonian Institution, to work with these institutions on the scientific procedures for collecting, assessing, disseminating and updating information on Aqaba's coral reef ecosystem. Credible scientific data will be key to effective legal processes to conserve and sustainably use Aqaba's marine resources.

Regional Environmental Law Enforcement - EPA  
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¶5. EPA, with MEPI support, has been at the forefront of strengthening environmental law enforcement in the Middle East through workshops on the principles of environment law enforcement (refs B, C), on principles of pollution

prevention (refs D, E), and in upcoming workshops on environmental impact assessments. EPA has worked with the NGO the International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (INECE) in strengthening environmental law enforcement capacity and networking in the region. Post would like to request a specialist in international environmental law enforcement, most likely from EPA, to undertake an Amman-based program to develop Jordanian capacity in environmental law enforcement which could be networked into a regional outreach program. The seeds for this network have already been sown through EPA's activities in the region over the past two years. The presence of a Science Fellow would make a major contribution towards institutionalizing and strengthening that investment.

#### Industrial Wastewater Specialist - EPA

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¶16. Post is fortunate to have engaged an EPA Science Fellow from the 2005 cycle to work with Jordan's Ministry of Environment on industrial wastewater assessment and remediation. Industrial wastewater in Zarka and its pollution of Jordan's fresh water resources were identified in the September 2004 Action Plan from the Statement on the Environment associated with the US-Jordan Free Trade Agreement, as a major bilateral priority (ref F). Wastewater treatment is a major Strategic Objective of USAID's Jordan Country Plan. The upcoming work by the 2005 Science Fellow is expected to be a major step forward in assessing the full scope of the industrial wastewater problem. Post requests a specialist in industrial wastewater prevention, most likely from the EPA, to follow-up on the initial assessment work being undertaken in summer ¶2006. This follow-up work might include creation and implementation of a manifest system, advising on appropriate company-level treatment processes, and other mechanisms to prevent and mitigate industrial wastewater pollution.

#### Scientific Cooperation and Research - NSF

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¶17. Post hosted an Embassy Science Fellow from the National Science Foundation in March - April 2006. That Fellow's work focused on promotion of innovation within Jordan. Development of science and technology both within the university system and in the private sector is a strong priority of Jordan's top leadership. As Jordan moves to expand its innovation and S&T capabilities, it will encounter structural obstacles that will require the knowledge of an experienced research manager. These might include development of incentives for promoting university research, expanding linkages with international funding mechanisms, fine-tuning grant program management systems, and other tasks. Post requests a Fellow from the National Science Foundation who can address these and related issues in close collaboration with professional colleagues in Jordan's research and educational sectors.

#### Post's Commitment to Resources

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¶18. Post is an enthusiastic and experienced supporter of the Embassy Science Fellows program, and understands post's commitments with respect to housing and other logistical support (ref A). Post has hosted three Science Fellows over the past three years, and two more are expected in summer ¶2006. Participants have had access to top-level Jordanian officials and have made major contributions to environmental solutions, water resource management and scientific research. Jordanian institutions have been engaged and appreciative of the contributions made by the Fellows. Jordanian colleagues are almost universally highly educated and fluent in English, so Arabic language skills are not a requirement. Fellows should be self-motivated, flexible, and collaborative to maximize the impact of their work. In addition to challenging and rewarding professional work, Fellows have also enjoyed the warm hospitality of their Jordanian colleagues and the cultural and natural

attractions readily available in Jordan such as the Dead Sea, Petra, Jerash, Wadi Rum, and the Gulf of Aqaba.

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